



Conservation, recreation and education are what North Carolina state parks are all about. A visit to any of them can show you why they're "Naturally Wonderful."

Environmental education is also a hallmark of North Carolina state parks. Each park offers free, interpretive programs by rangers on a regular basis that explore the marvels of that park's resources. The system also has exhibit specialists, naturalists and interpretive specialists that expand opportunities for education.

More than 1.3 million people visit the state parks each year. The state parks system employs about 400 and nearly 200 of those are park rangers and park superintendents who are commissioned law enforcement officers.

The parks system was begun in 1916 when a group of citizens sought to protect the summit of Mount Mitchell. It became the first state park in the Southeast and among the first in the nation. Many of the state parks were initiated by local citizens with a strong conservation ethic.

North Carolina's state parks are "Naturally Wonderful" and also wonderfully diverse. With 34 state parks and four state recreation areas, the system stretches from the highest sand dune on the East Coast at Jockey's Ridge to Mount Mitchell, the highest point in the eastern U.S. Between these points, you'll find mysterious bay lakes, wild swamps, rare sandhills, piedmont river systems and bold mountain streams.

NORTH CAROLINA STATE PARKS



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The Division of Parks and Recreation is a division of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Secretary
Dee Freeman
Beverly Leves Perdue
Governor

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Our Mission

The mission of the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation is:

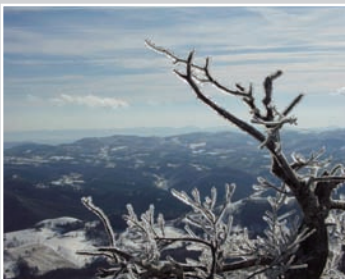
- to protect North Carolina's natural diversity;
- to provide and promote outdoor recreation opportunities throughout North Carolina; and,
- to exemplify and encourage good stewardship of North Carolina's natural resources for all citizens and visitors in North Carolina.



The North Carolina parks system's website at www.ncparks.gov gives complete information on each of our parks as well as programs of the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation. You'll find maps that can be downloaded plus details on park facilities, fees, reservations and special outdoor activities such as cycling, kayaking and rock climbing. Contact information for each park is provided as well as an up-to-date calendar of educational programs and special events. Check it out before your visit.

We also offer specialized brochures for many of our parks. These brochures include park maps and describe facilities in detail as well as the unique natural and historic aspects of the park. Just contact the park office or our Raleigh office at 919-733-4181, or email us at parkinfo@ncmail.net.

About our parks...



In North Carolina, we like to call our state parks "Naturally Wonderful." For us, this is more than a catch phrase. It indicates how we develop and manage our 40 state parks and recreation areas.

It has to do with our mission statement on the facing page, which, in turn, evolved from our state's constitution. Our principal mission is to preserve and protect the stunning natural resources in North Carolina. While it's impossible to keep pristine the more than 200,000 acres of parkland in our system, we've developed these parks cautiously with this idea of stewardship in mind. While there are myriad recreational opportunities, our mission demands relatively low-impact activities. We've been careful to arrange campgrounds and park amenities to complement, rather than compete with the natural features that attract so many visitors.

While visiting our state parks, you'll find that with the exception of three lakeside recreation areas and Chimney Rock, there are no admission fees. Early on, the people of North Carolina decided that the state's array of natural treasures should be enjoyed by as many as possible. Enjoy your exploration of North Carolina's state parks.

Please visit our website for a complete list of new parks under development and other types of units, including our 19 State Natural Areas.



Environmental Education

Environmental education and interpretation are priorities at our state parks. Many now offer exciting exhibit halls that give visitors a deeper understanding of the cultural and natural resources they encounter. Our park rangers are environmental educators who possess a keen knowledge of the natural world and share it freely through one-on-one encounters and interpretive programs.



Scheduled hikes, illustrated talks and explorations of one-to-two hours cover topics such as birding, animal lore, geology, astronomy, water quality and history. Check at a park office or our website for a schedule.

The core of our formal education program is the Environmental Education Learning Experience, or EELE. An EELE at each park brings classrooms into the natural world with approved curriculum guides that focus on the park's significant natural resources. There are hands-on activities, student information pages, worksheets, fact sheets and reference materials. Our website offers samples of EELE guides and a calendar of EELE workshops.

You can schedule an interpretive program or EELE for your group just by contacting a state park or recreation area.

Reservation Information

A full-service, online- and call center-based reservations system is now available and can be used to reserve campsites, picnic shelters and other park facilities. Where reservations are offered, there are requirements for advance notice and minimum and maximum stays.

www.ncparks.gov

1-877-7-CAMPNC
(1-877-722-6762)

**PARK GATES ARE LOCKED EACH NIGHT
WHEN THE PARK CLOSES.**

So, plan accordingly when arranging your arrival time and when making daytime excursions outside the park.

Parks & Recreation Trust Fund

The N.C. Parks and Recreation Trust Fund provides support to improve the quality of life for North Carolinians by preserving the state's natural resources and developing public parks and recreation facilities. Since its creation in 1994, trust fund grants have conserved more than 40,000 acres of state parkland and parks have been developed with new facilities such as visitor centers, campgrounds, improved trails, swim areas and educational exhibits. The trust fund is the primary funding source for adding to and improving state parks.

The N.C. Parks and Recreation Trust Fund also provides grant funds for local governments to improve recreation opportunities. The fund is fueled by money from the state's portion of the real estate deed transfer tax. Visit the trust fund's website at www.ncparks.gov/About/grants/partf_main.php.

Trails Program

The N.C. Trails Program helps volunteers, nonprofit groups and government agencies plan, develop and manage greenways and routes for hiking, biking and horseback riding, as well as water trails and off-road vehicle trails. The program administers two grant programs that fund a variety of trail projects. Visit the trails program at www.ncparks.gov/About/trails_main.php.



The trails program is also developing a system of trails crossing North Carolina from the Great Smoky Mountains National Park to the Outer Banks. This Mountains-to-Sea State Trail, when completed, will extend more than 1,000 miles. Learn more at www.ncparks.gov/About/trails_mst.php.

Support State Parks

Visit our Web store, where you can purchase books, apparel and other parks-related merchandise.

www.ncparkstore.com

Support North Carolina state parks with a license plate. There is a \$30 fee in addition to regular license fees (\$60 for personalized plates). Additional fees support conservation through the Parks and Recreation and Natural Heritage trust funds.

Contact the N.C. Division of Motor Vehicles to purchase a plate. www.ncdot.gov/dmv/



Rules and Safety

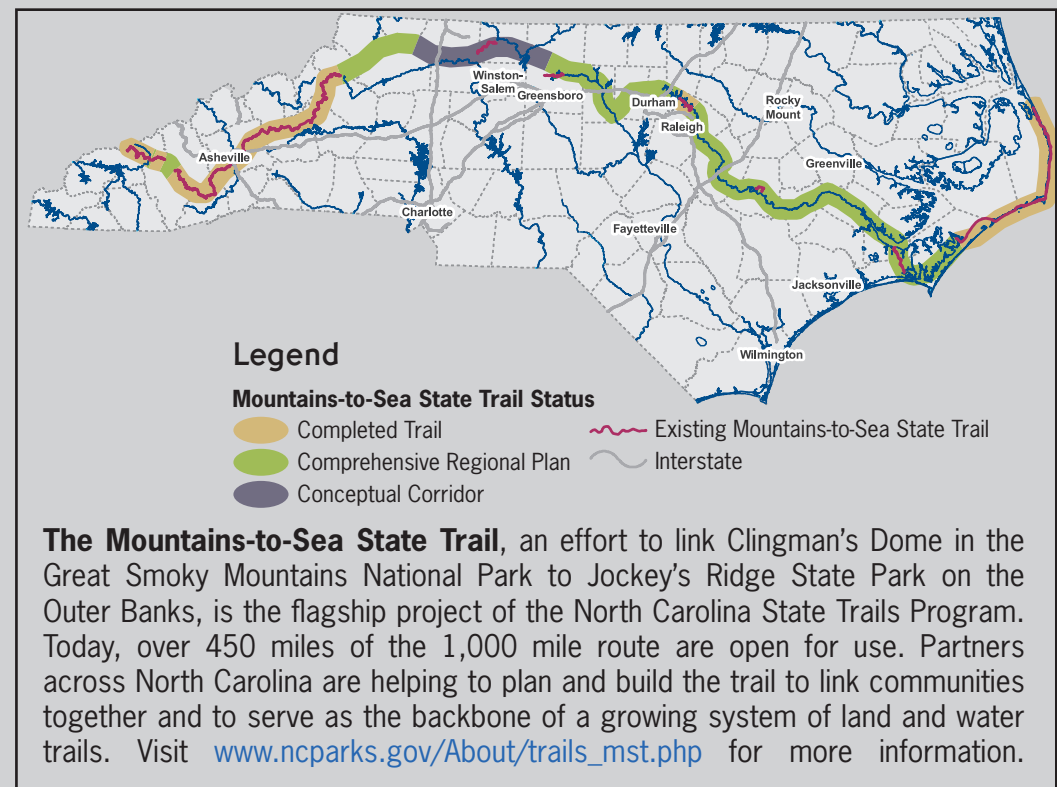
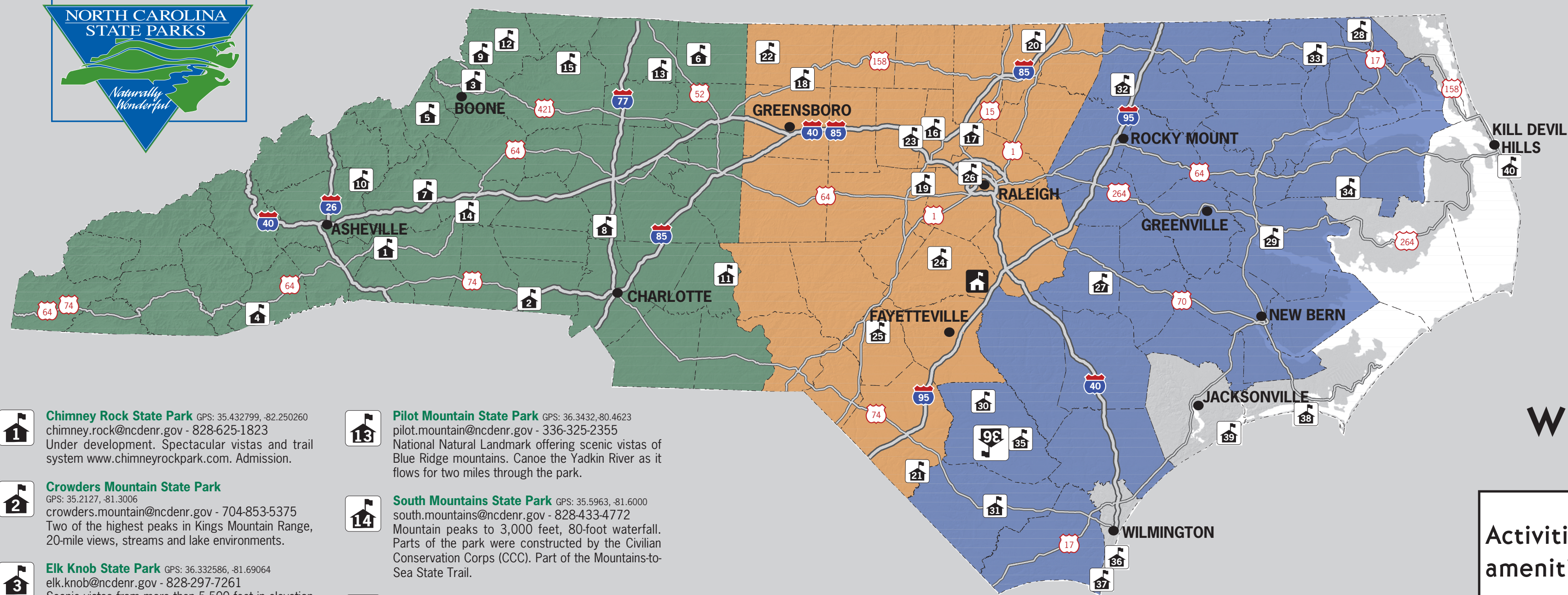
We're serious about safety. Follow these tips to make your visit to North Carolina's state parks a safe and rewarding experience.

- Drive carefully. Park speed limits are 25 mph unless otherwise posted. Watch for pedestrians, bicyclists and wildlife.
- Swim within reach of a friend.
- Supervise children at all times and equip them with personal flotation devices when playing around water.
- Dress properly. Check with park staff regarding weather and terrain.
- Make your plans known to park staff and family members should you plan a long hike.
- Allow plenty of time for a hike as daylight hours shorten so you won't be caught by darkness.
- Stay on designated trails and away from streams, waterfalls and cliff faces.













Here are some of the more common regulations for the protection of our parks and our visitors. Check with the park office for other rules pertaining to specific parks. A complete set of regulations is posted at the park office.

- Do not feed wildlife. Animals can be dangerous and carry disease. Report unusual behavior to park staff.
- The removal of any plant, animal, rock, mineral or artifact is prohibited.
- All areas managed by the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation are wildlife preserves. Hunting or trapping is prohibited.
- Boating and fishing regulations of the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission are enforced. Make sure you have appropriate licenses for freshwater, saltwater and trout fishing.
- Firearms and fireworks are prohibited.
- Fires are permitted in designated areas only.
- Camping is permitted in designated areas by permit only.
- The possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages is prohibited.
- Swimming is permitted in designated areas only.
- Pets must be on a leash no longer than six feet. Pets are not allowed in public buildings, bathhouses or swimming areas.

NORTH CAROLINA STATE PARKS AND RECREATION



www.ncparks.gov

- **Chimney Rock State Park** GPS: 35.432799, -82.250260
chimney.rock@ncdenr.gov - 828-625-1823
Under development. Spectacular vistas and trail system www.chimneyrockpark.com. Admission.
 - **Crowders Mountain State Park**
GPS: 35.2127, -81.3006
crowders.mountain@ncdenr.gov - 704-853-5375
Two of the highest peaks in Kings Mountain Range, 20-mile views, streams and lake environments.
 - **Elk Knob State Park** GPS: 36.332586, -81.69064
elk.knob@ncdenr.gov - 828-297-7261
Scenic vistas from more than 5,500 feet in elevation with rare and unique plant communities. Enjoy a picnic after a rugged hike to the summit.
 - **Gorges State Park** GPS: 35.1133, -82.9563
gorges@ncdenr.gov - 828-966-9099
Waterfalls, gorges and dramatic elevation changes provide setting for a concentration of rare and unique plant and animal species.
 - **Grandfather Mountain State Park**
GPS: 36.11139, -81.81250
grandfather.mountain@ncdenr.gov - 828-737-9522
Under development. Trails across rugged peaks with stunning views, access from adjacent Grandfather Mountain attraction www.grandfather.com.
 - **Hanging Rock State Park** GPS: 36.411906, -80.254122
hanging.rock@ncdenr.gov - 336-593-8480
Rock outcrops at elevations up to 2,580 feet, five waterfalls, mountain lake, access to scenic river. Part of the Mountains-to-Sea State Trail.
 - **Lake James State Park** GPS: 35.728710, -81.901123
lake.james@ncdenr.gov - 828-652-5047
Vistas of surrounding Black Mountains overlooking manmade 6,510-acre lake. Take advantage of the many recreation opportunities this lake has to offer.
 - **Lake Norman State Park** GPS: 35.6652, -80.9421
lake.norman@ncdenr.gov - 704-528-6350
State's largest manmade lake at 32,510 acres. More than 13 miles of biking trails.
 - **Mount Jefferson State Natural Area**
GPS: 36.397660, -81.473466
mount.jefferson@ncdenr.gov - 336-246-9653
Panoramic views from scenic Blue Ridge mountaintop at 4,683-foot elevation. National Natural Landmark.
 - **Mount Mitchell State Park** GPS: 35.7528, -82.2737
mount.mitchell@ncdenr.gov - 828-675-4611
Highest peak east of the Mississippi at 6,684 feet, views up to 100 miles, North Carolina's first state park. Part of the Mountains-to-Sea State Trail.
 - **Morrow Mountain State Park**
GPS: 35.373724, -81.073477
morrow.mountain@ncdenr.gov - 704-982-4402
Mountains up to 936 feet, peaceful lake. These pinnacles are the remains of one of the oldest mountain ranges in the eastern United States.
 - **New River State Park** GPS: 36.467680, -81.340350
new.river@ncdenr.gov - 336-982-2587
Nationally designated Wild and Scenic American Heritage River. It offers canoeing and hiking past scenic rock outcrops, farmlands and woodlands.

- 13 Pilot Mountain State Park** GPS: 36.3432, -80.4623
pilot.mountain@ncdenr.gov - 336-235-2355
National Natural Landmark offering scenic vistas of Blue Ridge mountains. Canoe the Yadkin River as it flows for two miles through the park.

14 South Mountains State Park GPS: 35.5963, -81.6000
south.mountains@ncdenr.gov - 828-433-4772
Mountain peaks to 3,000 feet, 80-foot waterfall. Parts of the park were constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Part of the Mountains-to-Sea State Trail.

15 Stone Mountain State Park GPS: 36.3873, -81.0273
stone.mountain@ncdenr.gov - 336-957-8185
Rock dome rising 700 feet above the valley floor, waterfalls, Blue Ridge mountain overlooks.

16 Eno River State Park GPS: 36.0783, -79.0050
eno.river@ncdenr.gov - 919-383-1686
Scenic wilderness corridor encompasses river, historic homestead and mill sites, extensive trail system. Part of the Mountains-to-Sea State Trail.

17 Falls Lake State Recreation Area
falls.lake@ncdenr.gov - 919-676-1027
GPS: 36.0117, -78.6888
Expansive reservoir and woodlands, habitat for diversity of animals, including American bald eagles. Part of the Mountains-to-Sea State Trail.

18 Haw River State Park GPS: 36.250646, -79.756364
haw.river@ncdenr.gov - 336-342-6163
The Summit Center provides training facilities, environmental education opportunities and overnight accommodations.

19 Jordan Lake State Recreation Area
jordan.lake@ncdenr.gov - 919-362-0586
GPS: 35.7369, -79.0169
13,900-acre reservoir, home to American bald eagles. Several areas for day-use or overnight recreation.


20 Kerr Lake State Recreation Area
kerr.lake@ncdenr.gov - 252-438-7791
GPS: 36.4871, -78.3294
50,000-acre reservoir with 800 miles of shoreline spanning North Carolina/Virginia state line.


21 Lumber River State Park GPS: 34.390023, -79.002225
lumber.river@ncdenr.gov - 910-628-4564
State natural and scenic 115-mile black water river. Enjoy Griffin's Whirl, a unique reverse flow area.


22 Mayo River State Park GPS: 36.438800, -79.938171
mayo.river@ncdenr.gov - 336-427-2530
Construction is under way for a visitor center, picnic shelters, restrooms and parking areas.


23 Occoneechee Mountain State Natural Area
eno.river@ncdenr.gov - 919-383-1686
GPS: 36.060835, -79.116900
Nearly three miles of trails provide beautiful views of the mountain and Eno River. Rare brown elfin butterfly population. Part of the Mountains-to-Sea State Trail.


24 Raven Rock State Park GPS: 35.4597, -78.9127
info.ravenrock@ncdenr.gov - 910-893-4888
Landmark bluff on that stretches 150-foot-high and more than a mile along the Cape Fear river.


-  **Weymouth Woods Sandhills Nature Preserve**
GPS: 35.1469, -79.3690
weymouth.woods@ncdenr.gov - 910-692-2167
Longleaf pine forest; broad, flat valleys; rare and endangered species include red-cockaded woodpecker, pine barrens tree frog, bog spicebush.


 **William B. Umstead State Park**
GPS: 35.8905, -78.7502
william.umstead@ncdenr.gov - 919-571-4170
More than 5,000 acres of hardwood forest in urban Triangle region including creeks, lakes and extensive trail network with scenic overlooks.


 **Carvers Creek State Park** - Under Development


 **Cliffs of the Neuse State Park** GPS: 35.2354, -77.8932
cliffs.neuse@ncdenr.gov - 919-778-6234
Multicolored cliffs up to 98 feet tower over historic river. Part of the Mountains-to-Sea State Trail.


 **Dismal Swamp State Park** GPS: 36.5057, -76.3551
dismal.swamp@ncdenr.gov - 252-771-6593
More than 14,000 acres of the Great Dismal Swamp. Part of the Underground Railroad. Bordered by the Dismal Swamp Canal.


 **Goose Creek State Park** GPS: 35.481853, -76.901414
goose.creek@ncdenr.gov - 252-923-2191
Hardwood swamps and brackish marshes along the Pamlico River, oaks draped in Spanish moss.


 **Jones Lake State Park** GPS: 34.682743, -78.595423
jones.lake@ncdenr.gov - 910-588-4550
Carolina bay environment, five-mile hiking trail through diverse habitats with lake overlooks.

 **Lake Waccamaw State Park**
GPS: 34.278985, -78.465485
lake.waccamaw@ncdenr.gov - 910-646-4748
One of the largest Carolina bays with unique plants and animals, including alligators.


 **Medoc Mountain State Park** GPS: 36.2639, -77.8883
medoc.mountain@ncdenr.gov - 252-586-6588
Exposed rock outcrops, bluffs; steep topography, rocks, minerals unusual to piedmont.


 **Merchants Millpond State Park**
GPS: 36.437105, -76.701585
merchants.millpond@ncdenr.gov - 252-357-1191
Maze of towering bald cypress trees draped in Spanish moss dominates lake and adjacent swamp.


-  **Pettigrew State Park** GPS: 35.791946, -76.409399
pettigrew@ncdenr.gov - 252-797-4475
Second-largest natural lake in state, old-growth trees, American Indian artifacts including second-oldest dugout canoe in U.S., plantation historic site and grave of Confederate general.


 **Singletary Lake State Park** GPS: 34.5831, -78.4496
singletary.lake@ncdenr.gov - 910-669-2928
Carolina bay environment, scenic lake vistas, undeveloped shoreline.

Carolina Beach State Park GPS: 34.0471, -77.9071
carolina.beach@ncdenr.gov - 910-458-8206
Diverse coastal ecological communities support rare plants, including Venus flytrap.

 **Fort Fisher State Recreation Area**
GPS: 33.9534, -77.929
fort.fisher@ncdenr.gov - 910-458-5798
Barrier island between Cape Fear River and Atlantic Ocean is home to rare and endangered coastal birds and sea turtles.

 **Fort Macon State Park** GPS: 34.695250, -76.681145
fort.macon@ncdenr.gov - 252-726-3775
Restored historic fort that played a key role in Civil War, barrier island beach. Fort tours, Civil War reenactments or enjoy the beautiful beach.

 **Hammocks Beach State Park** GPS: 34.6335, -77.1443
hammocks.beach@ncdenr.gov - 910-326-4881
On mainland and islands; park operates a seasonal passenger ferry to ocean beach, maritime forests, salt marshes, tidal creeks. Sea turtle nesting site.

 **Jockey's Ridge State Park** GPS: 35.9642, -75.6330
jockeys.ridge@ncdenr.gov - 252-441-7132
Tallest living sand dune along U.S. Atlantic coast, barrier island ecology. Stroll along the sound or hang glide from a dune. Part of the Mountains-to-Sea State Trail.

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